MCCC

Mid-Cities Commodore Club Dallas/Ft.Worth

June 1989 MCCC NEWS Volume 7 Issue 6

The President's Quarters

Jack DeTore

This is my second quarterly report in 1989. These reports are intended to look at the past quarter's actions from a perspective that also includes the next quarter's plans for our Club. What comes thru loud and clear is that people, not computer hardware or software, really make the Club work and that is what this report is about. Computer systems may come and go but what the members DO with them reflects their talent and desires. So, that's where I'm coming from in this report.

MCCC TALENT - It's great to see how talented individuals put things together using the tools they have ....and how they grow when new tools are available to them. Some examples:

Computer Arts - One of the most inspiring areas of computer activity is in the "arts". Jean Riley's computer paintings and illustrated novels are clearly world class. Simon Streminsky and Herschel Gibbs make music ranging from new age to nostalgic.

Desktop Publishing- Touching all of us thru the printed word are those talented individuals in the DP world: Barbara Cramer with a special talent for matching style to the audience; Bill Raecke packing loads of information into a clean newsletter layout; and Hank Castello joining that talent with productivity.

CLUB SERVICES - Our Club exists to provide the means for members and potential members to learn more about the tools we use and how the talented among us use these tools. We do this thru:

- Monthly Chapter meetings
- Club public domain library (a new twin disk drive was authorized for the Amiga library which has grown rapidly in activity)
- Club video archives
- Club BBS (our Amiga 1000 was "traded-in" for an Amiga 2000 authorized to speed up response and encourage BBS membership)
- Club newsletter (a new ink-jet printer was authorized to improve appearance and off-load a personal dot-matrix impact printer)
- Special Club events
- Workshops/Special interest groups. Our Club newsletter carries details about these activities. They happen because members care to make these things happen. Your help is welcome.

VIDEO ARCHIVE - Many of you may not be aware that video coverage of some chapter meetings and Club special events (AmiFORUM is the latest) exists and is available for members to review by providing a blank tape. These programs include: software/hardware demos; interviews with developers; and coverage of special activities. The tapes can be provided on VHS, Beta, or 8mm (preferred). A video program of excerpts can be provided for viewing at special events if members are interested. Several events have been digitized on Amiga disks which are available in the Club disk library. An index of tapes is available on request. Anyone interested in this subject including a video special interest group (VIDSIG) where music, sound, and graphics merge, please call me.

SPRING EVENTS '89 - Events that I'm listing here are not only our Club's activities but include those where members have participated:

- Jim Butterfield-4/8. This event was sponsored by SCOPE and hosted the Master teacher covering C64/C128/Amiga.
- MicroSearch-4/15. This open house in Houston brought out Amiga man Jay Miner as luncheon speaker. (No video)
- MCCC Spring Thing-4/22. A full-featured day of desktop publishing talent arranged by Ned Kelly.

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Deluxe Paint III

Amiga Software Review by Craig Bird
Mid-Cities Commodore Club

Opening Electronic Arts Deluxe Paint III is much like having Christmas in spring! Through the courtesy of Sonia King, owner of Amazing Computer Systems in Dallas, I had the honor of using Deluxe Paint III for a lengthy period of several weeks. This new release is the latest version of EA's line of Deluxe Paint programs and is without a doubt the most powerful paint program available today for the Amiga. The power of DPaintIII (as I'll refer to it from here on) is not only in its ability to create works of art with an ease and precision that you may never have thought possible but also in its newest form can create animations! DPaintIII gives you the ability to paint on multiple frames and then flip the frames to play the animation. More on this later.

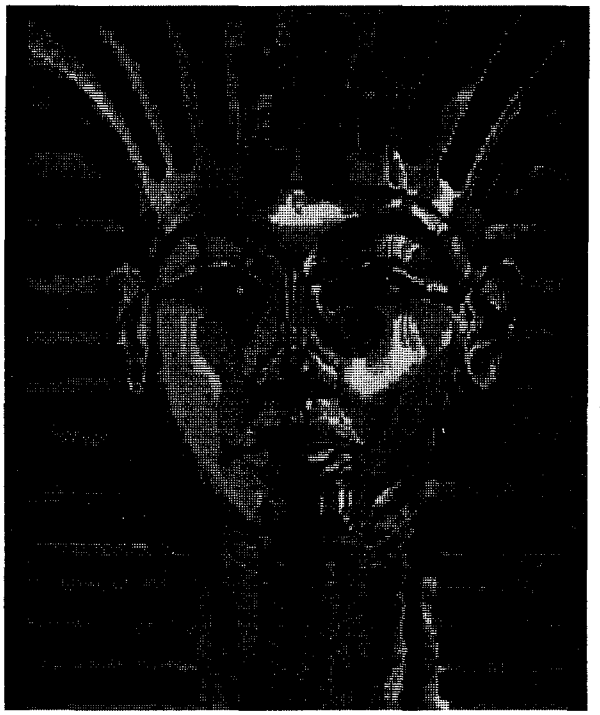
To the new user (like myself) the first thing that tells you how well this program was put together is the well organized and documented manual. First, is an introduction of Dan Silva. It was Dan's realization of the computer's potential for creative self-expression that has ultimately led to DPaintIII. His interest in computers and computer graphics dates back to the sixties when he used a computer to synthesize kinematic linkages (like robot arms, etc.) and continued while working as a contractor to NASA and later at Xerox (while doing user interface design for the Xerox Star System). Dan came to the realization that he could make a living having fun with computers. When he joined Electronic Arts in 1983, Dan had a clear vision of how a paint program should be. Through his hard work and creative ability Deluxe Paint was born. First released in November 1985, DPaint became an instant hit. Through persistence and the constant desire to improve his program DPaintII was released in 1986. No doubt that many of you know the creative possibilities DPaintII has to offer. Still not satisfied that his paintings couldn't move, his fascination with animation became the driving force to create a more powerful program. After several months of nonstop programming we now have DPaintIII. Is this the end? I seriously doubt it.

SOFTWARE PROVIDED BY
AMAZING COMPUTER SYSTEMS

After a brief introduction to computer graphics, the manual takes off into what's new to DPaintIII. As you'll see there's quite a bit. For new users, the manual takes you through setting up DPaintIII and then on a guided tour of the many tools and menus available. There are ten built-in brushes and as many built-in tools for painting, in the toolbox. These include ten different sized brushes and many tools such as; freehand, straight line, curve, fill, airbrush, rectangle, circle, ellipse, and polygon. Of course any image you can pick up can be a brush, which means that you can paint with virtually any object or picture (many images are packed into the art disk included in this three disk set. There are two new brush modes in DPaintIII: Tint and Extra Halfbrite. The halfbrite mode is only available if you are using 64 colors. (Note: not all Amiga 1000's support extra halfbrite mode. If the second 32 colors in your palette are the same as the first 32, you do not have an extra halfbrite chip. Your Amiga dealer can give you information on how to upgrade your computer if you want to use this mode. Also in the toolbox; a brush selector, grid, symmetry and text tools along with magnify and zoom features. In the lower right corner of the painting screen is the palette, where you select the color you want to paint with. The number of colors in the palette depends on the screen format you use. The color palette requester lets you mix your own custom set of up to 32 colors (64 with halfbrite) from a universe of 4096. The maximum number of colors you can have at any time depends on available memory; if your page is large or you have a large brush, you may not be able to choose the maximum number of colors. DPaintIII also includes four new fill types: Tint, Brush, Wrap, and Halfbrite. Now, finally there's a new way to fill an area. You can now fill outward to the background color by holding down the ALT key when you click with the fill tool. Here's how: change your background color to the color you want as the boundary for your fill; select the fill tool; hold down the ALT key and click inside the area you want to fill. This feature is especially useful for filling in an area of many colors, especially a gradient. The continuous freehand tool has been divided into the continuous freehand tool and the filled freehand shape tool. You'll have fun working with this one. In addition to using the ALT key for filling (changing color) you can now automatically paint outlined and filled shapes by holding down the ALT key when you click on a shape

tool. DPaintIII paints your filled shape using the current settings in the fill type requester and then traces the shape with your current brush using the settings in the spacing requester. Neat!

Among the vast number of changes, DPaintIII also supports overscan painting. Overscan gives you the ability to paint on an image larger than the screen. This is a very useful tool if you do video work. In the "choose screen format" requester just select overscan. Also new is the ability to flip your entire picture vertically or horizontally without having to pick it up as a brush. And the brush menu contains an edge option with commands to add a one pixel outline to your brush or remove a one pixel outline. The "about" box now contains more information about your current memory state. DPaintIII requires at least one megabyte of memory to run, and if you can afford it "more is better"!



DELUXE PAINT III

As a first time user of DPaint, I spent many hours using the "perspective" feature. This feature lets you paint in three dimensions to give your pictures a true feeling of depth. Perspective is not an easy feature to master, but time spent working with the other features of DPaintIII will give you the background you need to get going in it. When you use "perspective", you are actually working with a model that represents three dimensions using the two that are available on your screen. It will help you a good deal if you think of your computer screen as the front side of a box. Usually, when you paint with a brush in DPaintIII, the mouse moves your brush in only two directions: horizontally and vertically. As you move and rotate your brush in "perspective", you add a third direction to the motion: forward and backward. The key to working in "perspective" is rotating the brush. You can create some very dramatic images using this feature. Now what? Well, how about animations!!!

The basic idea behind animation in DPaintIII is that instead of having a single page to paint on, you have multiple pages that you can paint on and flip through. By creating images that differ slightly from page to page and then playing them back in rapid succession, you can create the illusion of motion. The first step in building an animation is to create the frames you want to paint on. From the "Anim" menu choose "Frames>Set#". The "Set Frame Count" requester appears. Click in the count edit field, and choose the number of frames to paint on. Now select the brush you want to paint with and begin. The trick of animation in DPaintIII is to paint a slightly different picture on successive frames. This is the first method to create an animation in DPaintIII, by painting on a series of frames individually.

To create animations that involve simple movement of an object, DPaintIII provides a much easier method called "Animpainting". Essentially, the frames flip automatically while you paint. Here's how: click in the CLR window. The "options" requester appears. When you click CLR with multiple frames, DPaintIII gives you the option of clearing only the current frame, a range of frames in your animation, or all frames. Now, click "All Frames" in the requester. Instantly all of your frames are cleared and you are automatically set back at frame 1. Now select a brush and tool. Hold down the Left Amiga key (the Commodore key on the Amiga 500) and paint by holding down the left mouse button and dragging across the screen from left to right. As you paint, the frames flip, so you place only one image on each frame of your animation. Notice that the frame counter in the menu bar changes to show you the frame you are on. When you reach the last frame, you loop back to frame 1, where you'll see your first brush image again. Easy huh?

The third method of creating animations involves the "Move" requester. The "Move" requester lets you move and rotate a brush over a number of animation frames. More important however, you can move and rotate the brush in all three dimensions. Essentially, you are painting using "Perspective", but DPaintIII makes all of the calculations for the individual frames. There are numerous effects you can use while creating animations including: receding or approaching shapes, dissolve, expanding circles, trails, the slinky, curving titles, tumbling 3D objects, planetary orbits, scrolling background, moving ground, and rolling horizon.

At this point I have only touched on the major features of and improvements to DPaintIII and in no way have I begun to cover the myriad of possibilities with this fine program. The three disk set includes a Program Disk, Art Disk and Animation Disk along with its very comprehensive manual.

If you have not had the pleasure of working with Deluxe Paint III, do yourself a favor, drop by Amazing Computer Systems at 5100 Belt Line Road (Village On The Parkway Center) at the Dallas Parkway (or your favorite Amiga Dealer) and spend some time acquainting yourself with all the powerful features of this incredible Amiga paint program. If Deluxe Paint III is not in your software library you're missing the boat!!!!!!!!

The President's Quarters

Continued From Page 1

• AmiFORUM-5/6,7. A computer fair of dealers and developers from New York and Dallas. We hope they will take advantage of the bigger counter space and fun level per buck of our METCOM*89!

SUMMER/FALL EVENTS '89 - These events will probably be attended by some of our members. We would like reports, pictures, and video clips especially of premiere news:

• AmiEXPO-7/28-30. Chicago
• METCOM*89-10/14. Arlington [SIGN-UP THRU NED!]
• AmiEXPO-10/20-22. Santa Clara
• World Of Commodore ??

CLUB RELATED NEWS

Software Terminal's to close - At the May 18 Amiga Central Chapter meeting, Rick Bilyea announced that his retail business ceases as of May 31. Rick, we are truly sorry this had to happen and wish you the best in your next efforts.

Max Toy leaves helm at Commodore. Harold Copperman takes over. A reason may be that the US market is not growing as fast as the European market for Amigas.

AMIGAs at Budget Computer- Hank Castello says he's now handling Amigas and IBM type machines. In addition to production halt on the C128D's, he hears that there is a production hold on C64's.

Member status of our club during the last quarter of this year is about equal to the level of last year. There is a shift in membership in that Amiga chapters increased about 20% and C64/C128 chapters decreased about 20%. This trend is the basis of our plans for the rest of this year. Get ready METCOM*89!

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Neuromancer

C64 Software Review by Simon Rich

Reprinted From the Commodore Users of Bartlesville Newsletter

All right! The past few months I've been through the detail of Pool of Radiance and the complexities of Ultima V on the 64/128; I've been exposed to the graphic glories of Dragon's Lair and the total involvement of Dungeon Master on the Amiga. But JUST when I was feeling a bit jaded about adventure games in general, I took the advice of one of my Game Room hosts, and went out and bought Interplay's Neuromancer.

It takes a lot to get me involved in a game right from the initial boot-up, but THIS game has done it! Not having read Gibson's novel, on which the game is based, I was quite unprepared for the goings-on. With a user interface that appears to be a happy blend of Bard's Tale/Wasteland and the LucasFilm games, Maniac Mansion and Zack McCracken, Neuromancer is a sheer joy to play.

From the moment you lift your face out of a plate of ersatz-spaghetti ::gag:: in 21st century Tokyo and log onto a BBS through the convenient port on the bar's wall, the action is non-stop. You're a "cyberspace cowboy", an "Indiana Jones" in a computer-centered world, and many of your fellow cowboys/friends are disappearing. What's going on and why? That's YOUR job to find out in the game.

So off you go to the Pawn Shop to retrieve your "deck" (i.e. laptop computer), search for passwords to "hack" onto systems in search of information, and look for "stuff" in this metropolis gone mad.

Is it dangerous? Certainly! Is it lethal? You bet! And is it fun? The most! My one complaint about many role-playing adventures is their lack of humor - that humor which is necessary to leaven the most serious of goings-on. Neuromancer has brought back the old-fashioned "piracy on the high-seas" that I haven't experienced since I first saw "Raiders of the Lost Ark".

The game itself is on both sides of two disks. Copy protection is of the wheel-based variety, so you may (indeed, must) back up the distribution disks before playing. I found it very convenient for most phases of the game to use joystick control (except where typed input is necessary).

As you play the game, you gradually increase your skills and material (and non-concrete) goods, with the eventual goal of going on sojourns to Cyberspace - an area of "information in its purest form."

This TRON-like place is BRUTAL! From the ICE (Intrusion Countermeasure Electronics) to the AI's (Artificial Intelligence) which in many cases design the ICE and run the companies into who's computers you're "hacking", a trip to Cyberspace is literally "a thrill a minute".

The ending? Well, I haven't gotten there yet, not by a long shot. I am, however, looking forward to many hours of entertainment and adventure with this fine addition to my library. Fine graphics, eminent playability, lots of fun, and even (for those who like it) a soundtrack by DEVO.

It's all enough to make me want to go out and get my hair spiked. "What hair", you ask? Hmmm, guess I'll stay home and play Neuromancer some more and just pretend.

The Fine Print

The Mid-Cities Commodore Club is a not-for-profit organization devoted to the collection and dissemination of computer knowledge, to the encouragement of computer education, and to the use of Commodore computers in the home, at school, and in business. Appropriate and legal use of all types of software is encouraged by this club.

The MCCC is not connected with Commodore Business Machines, Inc. Commodore and Commodore product names (PET, CBM, VIC, C64, C128, and Amiga) are registered trademarks of Commodore, Inc.

Our meetings are open to all. Membership dues are $20 per year or $12 for six months and entitle the member to a monthly mailed copy of the MCCC News, free access to the club's extensive public domain and shareware sofware library, and discounts at many area merchants. An additional $12 annual fee provides access to the MCCC ASCII and Graphic bulletin board systems.

Material printed in the MCCC News is not copyrighted unless so noted. Articles may be reprinted by other user groups or individuals who find it helpful as long as proper credit is given to the author and to the MCCC.

The MCCC News accepts advertising from both members and from commercial establishments. Member advertising is free but must not be of a commercial nature. A commercial ad is defined as one where multiple like items are available for sale to anyone. Members submitting such ads are subject to commercial rates. Commercial rates for camera-ready ads are as follows for a single month or (consecutive three months): full page - $30 ($81), half page - $15 ($40), quarter page - $10 ($27), business card - $5 ($13). Materials to be inserted will cost $.08 per copy.

The deadline for submissions to the MCCC News is the Monday following the third Saturday of each month. Payment must accompany all ad copy. Make checks payable to MCCC and mail to P.O. Box 813, Bedford, Texas 76095.

AmiFORUM

A Quick Report

Bill Raecke

May 6 & 7. Two days of Amiga fun. The idea was to have a small version of AmiEXPO close enough for those of us in this area to attend. It was nice, but the scale was much smaller than I expected.

DEVELOPERS

Byte by Byte was there, showing off Sculpt-4D and wowing us with its capabilities. They showed a lot of animations that we haven't seen before. Your trusty librarian is currently scouring the countryside and should soon succeed in adding them to our collection.

Silver Fox Software was showing previews of their soon to be released disk magazine "Canvas". Very impressive. This magazine will make the wish list of a lot of us.

Precision Software was showing a very informative demonstration of their products. SuperBase Professional has become the database standard in the Amiga world and has made very important inroads into the MS-DOS world with its power and ease of use. SuperPlan makes a perfect companion product, providing a powerful spreadsheet that can be linked (via ARexx) to SuperBase Professional.

Microbotics had their impressive line of hardware including the 8-Up providing up to 8 megabytes of RAM on a single card and the HardFrame, a very powerful hard-disk controller.

Haitex was demonstrating X-Specs 3D as well as their other software products. Most of you are familiar with Haitex products through our club meetings. It is always nice to look at this impressive line of products again.

Lattice had the booth next to us and was answering questions about Lattice 5.0 and Lattice C++. Check last month's newsletter for an excellent review of Lattice 5.0.

This is not a complete list, but it is close to complete. My apologies to anyone I have forgotten.

DEALERS

Compu-Save was in attendance from New York. They had a very large booth and almost every piece of software imaginable.

Our own Amazing Computer Systems was the only local dealer at the show. As always, their software prices were excellent and, although the booth was not as large and that of Compu-Save and the software selection not as great, what they brought was the latest.

OTHERS

Commodore Business Machines was there showing some terrific videos about our favorite computer and answering questions.

Amiga World was introducing Amiga owners to their magazine.

Classes were offered, taught by some of the biggest names in the Amiga community.

MCCC

As most of you are aware, the MCCC was represented at the show. For us, it was an excellent investment. Financially, we broke even. More importantly, however, we gained quite a few new members and we will probably continue to do so now that more people know that we exist. There is also the possibility that some of the developers which attended AmiFORUM can be persuaded to come to our own METCOM*89. Your Vice President, Ned Kelly, will be working on this.

IMPRESSIONS

It was far too small. Unless you were attending classes, there was nowhere near enough to keep you occupied for an entire day. Although there were quite a few dealers and developers involved in the show, floor space was considerably less than at our METCOM*88 - and there was not nearly as much to do. This is not to say that it was a waste of time - quite the contrary. But let's hope that when AmiFORUM returns next year (and I certainly hope that they do) it will be bigger and better than ever.

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The MCCC Spring Thing

A Quick Report

Bill Raecke

Our Spring Thing was held on April 22. The subject was Desktop Publishing. As with most meetings, we got off to a late start, but it was worth the wait. Barbara Cramer started us off with an introduction to some of the concepts of desktop publishing and to the concepts of page design in general. That was followed by demonstrations of Paper Clip Publisher and geoPublish - two of the heavyweights in the C64/C128 world - by Bob Krause and Hank Castello respectively. I followed with a demonstration of the latest Amiga powerhouse, PageStream. And Glen Herring topped off the day with a demonstration of Quick Brown Box.

How was it? I thought it was terrific. I learned a lot from Barbara - as always. You may see some improvements here as a result. And I was very impressed by the capabilities of both Paper Clip Publisher and geoPublish. In particular, Paper Clip Publisher reminded me a great deal of PageSetter which was used until recently to produce this newsletter on an Amiga. Quick Brown Box looks as if it should be added to any C64 owner's wish list.

Complaints? I had just one - and this is my own opinion, not that of the MCCC. This kind of an event involves a great deal of work by a lot of people. It also involves a significant expense for the room rental and other associated costs. Less than 15% of the membership attended - including those who made it happen. This is the same kind of response that we had with last year's Spring event on the subject of telecommunications. In both cases, the shows have been excellent but the attendance was lower than at many chapter meetings. This kind of attendance indicates to me that we are wasting our time and your money by planning these kinds of events. If there is some other kind of event that will be better received, please make your wishes known to one of the club officers.

I want to take the opportunity to express the appreciation of the MCCC to those who made the event worth while for those of us who attended. There were a lot of people involved and a lot of hours spent. Special thanks to all the people mentioned above as well as to Ned Kelly (Vice President and general organizer/planner), Jack DeTore (President and general guiding light), and Hank Castello for the use of the large screen TV (without which everyone elses' efforts would have been, at best, very difficult to see.

The Software Terminal

Bill Raecke

Software Terminal no longer exists - at least not in the form in which we knew it. Software Terminal has been with us for quite some time. Our first Amiga Chapter organizational meeting was held at the Terminal back in early 1986. Since then, Richard Bilyea and his store have supported us in many ways - doorprizes, user group discounts on merchandise, special deals on club hardware purchases, signing up new members for us at his store - these are just a few of the ways that he has helped us. Above all, Richard and the Software Terminal have been friends of the MCCC.

On the bright side, there will be a new business. Exactly what form that new business will take is unknown as of this writing. We know that the software publishing business will survive. It is still possible to purchase Tele-Games, Tele-Wars, Tele-Epic, and the Intruder Alert. As for the rest, we will have to wait.

We wish the Software Terminal the best during this reorganization period and look forward to doing business in the future. But we will still miss the old Software Terminal and we mourn its passing.

Word Perfect Defends Itself

By Pete Peterson Of Word Perfect
Reprinted from Usenet via Amy Today

I spent some time on the phone today with an Amiga user who wanted to tell me how upset he was to learn that we have cancelled PlanPerfect for the Amiga and put on hold any plans for a major revision to WordPerfect. The person was especially upset to learn that the decision was based largely on monetary considerations.

All of this is true. This week we took five programmers from the Amiga group and moved them to OS/2 or Unix. That left two programmers to maintain (fix the bugs) in the current versions of WordPerfect and Library. We will continue to sell these versions, and we will from time to time issue minor releases to fix bugs.

For those of you who are unhappy or upset about the decision, I offer the following explanation. I know it may not help much to understand the reasons, but I will offer them to you so you at least know what happened.

As has been discussed on this forum, we have a few problems in the Amiga market. I would suggest our problems are as follows:

1--We do not show fonts on screen

2--We do not support any graphics on screen or in a document

3--Our price is too high for the market

4--Some people feel our software has too many bugs.

4 is, of course, something we can do something about (and there is an interim release coming in a couple of weeks). 1, 2 and 3 are tougher.

We don't have an easy way of getting fonts and graphics on screen. 5.0 for the PC handles fonts and graphics well, but not on screen. We probably won't have a WYSIWYG DOS version that can be ported for another year, and a port of a DOS version would take 18 months after that.

The Amiga programmers had been planning on porting the next Mac version, but the big problem with using the Mac code (which is 68000 assembly) is that we rely completely on the Macintosh facilities for printing. That means the Amiga group would have to write all the printing code themselves, in addition to the code translation. Such a product could not be ready until mid-1990 at the earliest - and probably longer. We thought of using our printing code from the C (Unix) version, but the code is just too big to be used effectively on the Amiga.

The third alternative is to write a word processor from scratch. Such a project would take 6 to 7 programmers about 18 months (an optimistic guess).

So whatever we do, we arrive very late to the market--probably the end of 1990 at the earliest. And once we arrive, we probably have to enter with a price closer to $195. At that price (distributor price of $80-$100) given the salaries we pay our programmers and the support we offer, we don't feel we can make money.

Most of our Amiga programmers are very discouraged with the decision. They love the machine and they like working together. They have worked hard without much commercial success. But Bruce, Alan and I (the Board of Directors) cannot fund the new products without some hope that the products will be successful. Given the timing, the price point, and the costs of development, it just doesn't make sense.

We had hoped the German market would generate enough money to pay for the projects, but unfortunately we are not selling in Germany. While sales of the Amiga are strong, most of the sales are for 500s, and we don't run well at all on the 500.

We're sorry. We know a lot of customers will be unhappy with these decisions. We entered the market because a few of our programmers loved the machine. It was a decision of the heart, not the head. We tried to pull back last summer when our WordPerfect sales fell off badly, but the programmers pleaded for more time. We reconsidered the decision in January, and again (with our hearts) decided to give it a little more time. Since then sales have fallen off even more, and now we don't see any way to justify the new products.

WordPerfect is a great word processor and the Amiga is a great machine. Our 4.1, 4.2 or 5.0 versions, however, are not the right versions for the Amiga. We need 6.0, and 6.0 isn't ready yet. Once it's ready, we may change our decision, but in the meantime, we can make better use of the programmers on other machines.

New Public Domain!
New Products:

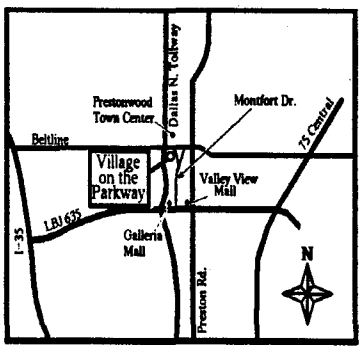
Design 3D SlipStream JUG Action Fighter Indiana Jones Kennedy Approach
Formation ManHunter PoliceQuest Rampage Prison Zork Zero Thinker ChromaPaint BattleHawks
Hostage AuntArtic Adventure Twilight Zone GoldRush ThunderBlade
TestDrive II City Desk 2.0 Journey Project Master Emerald Mines II

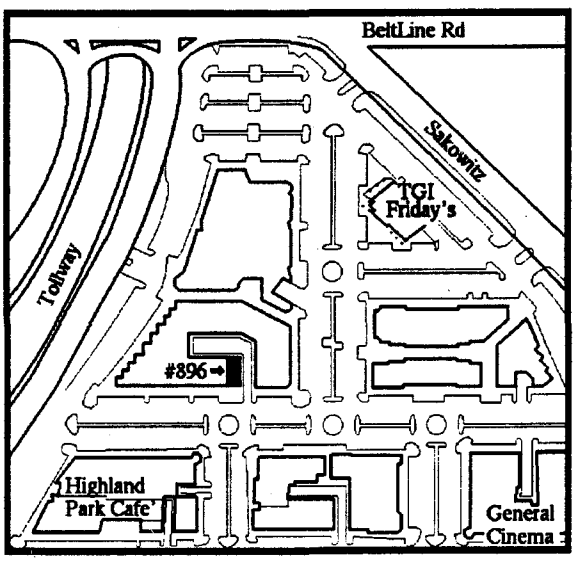
Specials:

Arkanoid Torch 2081 Marauder II Haicalc WBExtras, Photon Paint 1.0 Grabbit
Zoom! 2+2 President is Missing Encore Stellaryx Video Wizared Financial + BPaint Fancy Fonts 3D
LexCheck Yamaha Keyboard Setup

DELUXE PAINT III * STAR WARS * EVIL GARDEN * PROFESSIONAL DRAW * 1.3 ROMS * RAM EXPANSION * SCULPT ANIMATE 4D * TECHNO COP * EXPANSION TECHNOLOGIES HARD DRIVES * FLEXIBLE DATA * ELECTRONIC ARTS * CALIFORNIA ACCESS * LINKWORD LANGUAGE SERIES * THE WORKS! PLATINUM * BALLISTIX * PROFESSIONAL DATARETRIEVE * SPACE QUEST II * PHA$AR 3.0 * GOLD OF THE REALM * PERFECT SOUND 500 * MOVIESETTER * AMIGA WORLD * AMAZING COMPUTING * AMIGA TRANSACTOR * INFO! * AMIGA USER INTERNATIONAL * AHOY'S AMIGA USER * GREAT VALLEY PRODUCTS HARD DRIVES * EXPANSION TECHNOLOGIES FLASHCARD * EXPRESS COPY HARD DRIVE BACKUP * 200XJ JOYSTICK * AMIGA CARRYING CASES * TAX BREAK * PUBLISHER'S CHOICE * SAFESKIN KEYBOARD PROTECTORS * MANAGER INFARED MOUSE * POWER MASTERS * BALANCE OF POWER 1990 * CAPTAIN FIZZ * GFA BASIC 3.0 *

Amazing Computer Systems





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New Stuff I Just Got

Amiga Reviews by Bill Raecke
Mid-Cities Commodore Club

It's been a slow month. Not that I don't have a lot of new things. It's just that I've been so busy working on the new BBS that I haven't had time to so much as open the packages, much less write a review. There is just one program that I managed to play for a short while, and it deserves a mention.

Mind-Roll is a game by Epyx that my son purchased at AmiFORUM from Amazing Computer Systems. Since he bought it, I had no choice but to find time for the two of us to try it out. The good news is that it was worth the trouble. Mind-Roll is a game of the puzzle/action variety. Your playing piece is a rolling eyeball - a bit wierd. You must maneuver your eyeball through ten "planes" of puzzles/mazes all the while racing against the clock.

The first plane is a real challenge - not because of its difficulty, but because it is unclear what to do. The game starts with your eyeball on a narrow plank that runs vertically down the center of the screen. The plank is composed of small squares just large enough for your eyeball to fit on. According to the instructions, you must "roll or bounce the length of the plank and drop through the Void into five subplanes". I tried to roll the length of the plank, but soon found myself out of time before ever seeing the end. After coming to this frustrating end several times, I discovered, almost accidentally, that the only real way to reach the end was by bouncing. You must bounce from square to square the length of the plank. If you touch the partition between the squares, you are placed back at the beginning of the plank. The documentation could obviously use a little work.

At any rate, after this difficult start, things become a little easier. That doesn't mean that the game is easy - just that it is normally not quite that difficult to determine what you are supposed to do. In plane 2, you a faced with a maze. You must collect keys (in the proper order) to open doors which eventually will lead you to the GOAL -- all the while you must avoid the ELIMINATORS and use TELEPORTS to take you from one part of the maze to the other. In plane 3, you must avoid touching the ELECTRIC SEA (which speeds up the clock) and find four hidden amulets in order to make the GOAL appear. Each of the ten planes is different - and each is challenging. Mind-Roll also allows you to select a starting level - so if you are needing practice, you don't have to start at the beginning each time.

For less than $20, it's a bargain. Buy it!

Double-Sided Paper Facts

Commentary by Reggie Ramloose
Nashville Commodore Users Group

The good news is that, due to the rising sales of computers, the price of diskettes is falling.

The bad news is that the near future is likely to bring higher prices for paper supplies.

However, if you still use the old no. 2 bonded lead word processor, I have some useful information: you can double-side your notebook paper! Although paper manufacturers only certify the front side of a piece of paper, it is a little-known fact that the back side is capable of holding the same amount of written information.

"...it is a little-known fact that the back side is capable of holding the same amount of written information."

You, too, can use the back side of your paper. But before you do, I must inform you that there are mixed feelings about doing so. Paper manufacturers are quick to warn that writing on the back side of the sheet can cause problems for the data on both sides of the paper. They will not honor warranties if they find that the back side has been used.

The biggest problem is write-through, a condition which may cause data on each side to be obscured by the ghost image of data on the reverse. This occurs if the wrong pencil or pen is used, or too much pressure is applied during the writing process.

There are problems of standardization as well. Some users turn the paper upside-down when writing on the back, while others leave it right side up. (If the paper is held upside-down during the read process, it will be in the wrong orientation to the "head", and a read error will occur).

Many public school teachers, publishers, and government offices frown upon the practice of using the back side of the paper, and will not accept material if both sides of the paper have been used. Students and other paper users claim, however, that they have used the back of many thousands of pages with little or no loss of data. A few go so far as to claim that there is a conspiracy among paper manufacturers, merchandizers, and public officials to discourage the use of back side.

You must decide for yourself it you will use the

back side of the paper. But should you decide to give it a go, here's how. Look at a sheet of paper. You can tell the front by several methods. First, the row of alignment holes goes toward the left. Secondly, the watermark (if present) can be read if you hold the paper up to a light.

To doubleside a sheet, turn it over. Examine the back, looking especially for obvious flaws and defects. If the overall appearance is satisfactory, then with a ruler and pen, mark hole locations on the right side of the front. (You should try this initially with paper containing no valuable data). Use a regular holepunch to make the holes (you may purchase one at a department store, but I don't recommend that you tell them what you intend to use it for).

With the completion of the punching process, your paper is now double sided. Good luck if you decide to try it.

Thought For The Month

You can't have everything.

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Where would you put it?

CLUB DISCOUNTS

These dealers offer special discounts to club members
Be sure to show your membership card

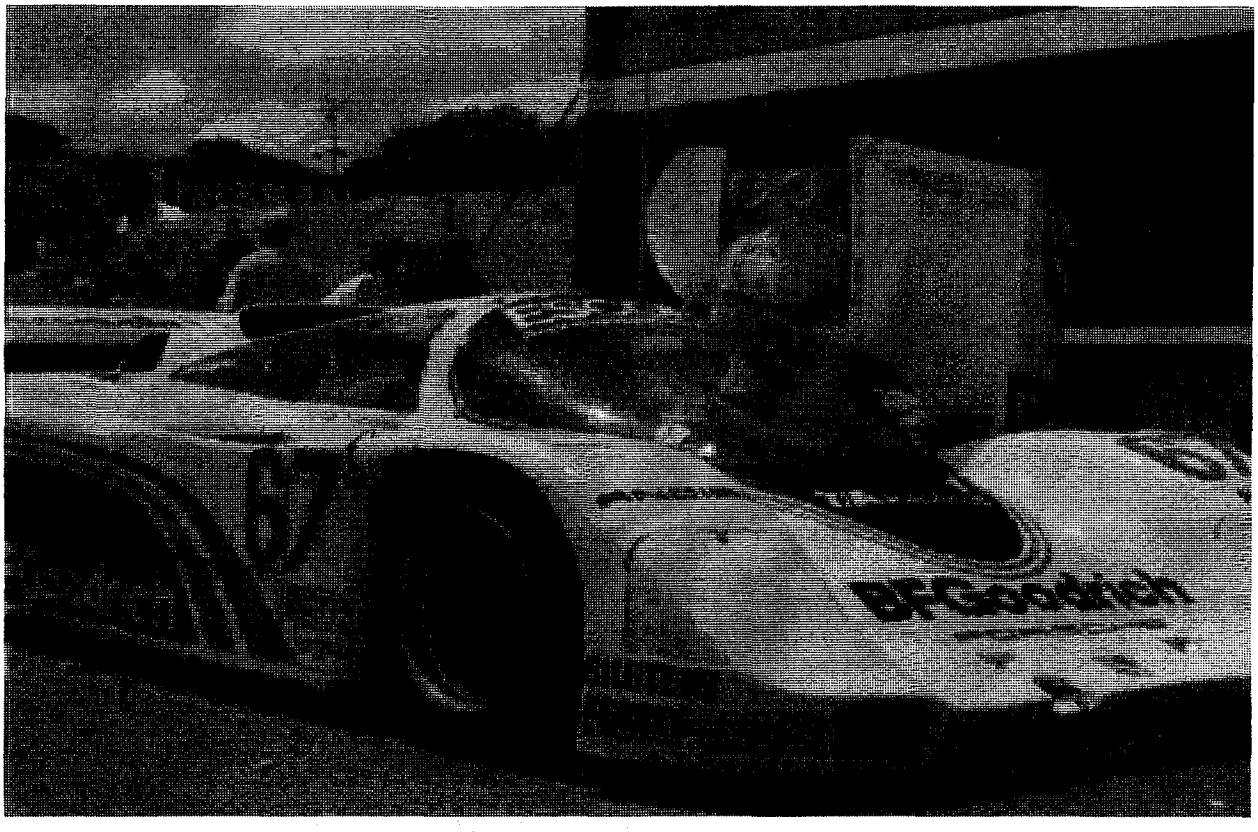
Amazing Computer Systems
Amiga Software and Hardware
5100 Beltline Rd #896
Dallas, Texas
(214) 386-8383

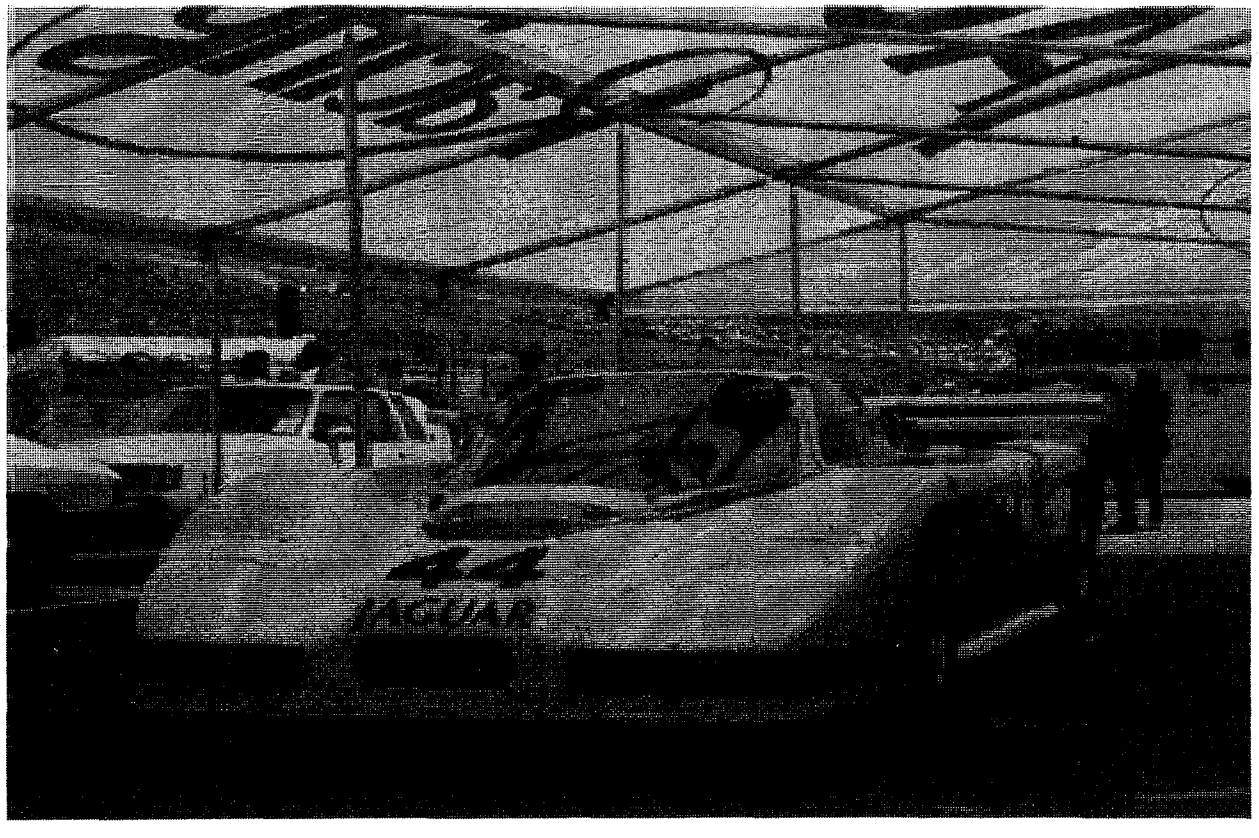
Action Computer
C64, C128, Amiga
Hardware and Service
2720 Royal Lane
Dallas, Texas
(214) 484-7838

Software Terminal
Amiga Software and Hardware
C64 and C128 Software
3014 Alta Mere Drive
Fort Worth, Texas
(817) 244-4150

Computer Skills
Amiga Software and Hardware
66 Wilshire Village
Euless, Texas
(817) 267-5151

Sof-Tex
C64, C128, Amiga Repair
(817) 577-0410 (Metro)




JAGUAR

NEW AMIGA PICTURES

The pictures on page 12 are some samples of new digitized art work for the Amiga. The black and white reproductions don't do them justice. They are the most remarkable digitized pictures I have seen on this or any computer and are far superior to anything available on the Amiga 'till now. They are literally breathtaking.

The collection consists of five pictures. All were originally digitized with a Eikonix 1435 35mm slide scanner hooked up to a SUN workstation. They were originally scanned at 4096X2800 pixels at 36 bits per pixel and later converted to an Amiga HAM interlaced overscan format. There is a special display program on the disk since our normal Superview doesn't seem to be able to handle them.

If you don't have this disk in your collection yet, be sure to get a copy at the next meeting. Ask for Fred Fish's AmigaLibDisk196.

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Normal Meeting Schedule

First Saturday	MCCC Board of Directors
Second Tuesday	Amiga By-The-Loop Chapter
Second Saturday	Arlington/Grand Prairie Workshop
Third Tuesday	Arlington/Grand Prairie Chapter
Third Thursday	Amiga Central Chapter
Third Saturday	Fort Worth Chapter
	HEB Chapter

(Check Monthly Schedule for Last Minute Changes)

Amiga By-The-Loop Chapter

President	Brent Wood	246-3707
Vice President	David Owens	577-2304
Treasurer	Bruce Nelson	498-0899
Secretary/Reporter	Craig Bird	540-3360
Librarian	Gary Campbell	297-4125

Amiga Central Chapter

President	Bill Keatley	485-8666
Vice President	Jack Smith	731-8108
Treasurer	Bill Raecke	465-2014
Secretary/Reporter	Bill Raecke	465-2014
Librarian	Ned Kelly	277-5825

Arlington/Grand Prairie Chapter

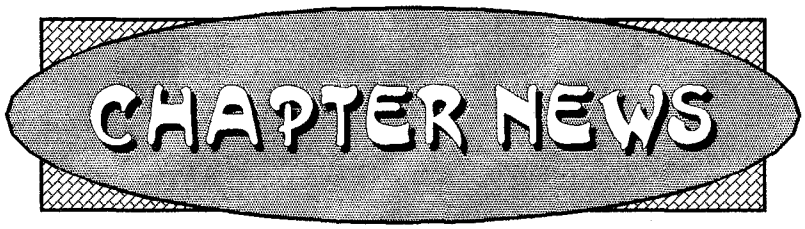
President	Glen Herring	572-0489
Vice President	Brad Dumler	483-2322
Treasurer	Janet Hamm	465-6624
Secretary/Reporter	Eddie Allen	259-1741
Librarian	Blake Brown	642-6107

Fort Worth Chapter

President	Bob Krause	292-6639
Vice President	Rich Meyer	292-6387
Treasurer	John Sookma	346-6690
Secretary/Reporter	Ellen Triplett	295-5709
Librarian	Joe Ostrokol	534-1990

Hurst-Euless-Bedford Chapter

President	Eldor Luedtke Jr.	626-0518
Vice President	Jon Moreland	579-1293
Treasurer	Fred Noble	838-5459
Secretary/Reporter	Robyn Wilson	282-3458
Librarian	Curtis Crago	281-0568



Amiga By-The-Loop
by
Craig Bird

This month's meeting was filled with activity! David Owens opened the meeting announcing that sufficient contributions had been collected ($40) from the two Amiga chapters to send to PKWARE, Inc. of Glendale, Wisconsin, for their Amiga ported version of PKAX, an un-arc utility used by so many of us. Our contributions now will be collected for Steve Tibbitt's VirusX virus check utility. Please donate generously for this much used program. Our "dumb question box" was absent this evening, so questions were taken and answered from our group of 38 members and guests in attendance, including new members.

Bob Kaufmann, Store Manager of Software, Etc. at North Hills Mall brought an Amiga for the night's software demonstration as well as several door prizes. Software, Etc. has been supporting the Amiga since November 1988 and is dedicated to carrying a variety of titles both for productivity and entertainment. Bob introduced Norma Beck, the Central Regional Sales Representative for Broderbund software (pronounced "brooderbund" -- a Swedish word for brotherhood!). Norma brought a soon to be released version of "Where In The World Is Carmen Sandiego?", an educational adventure game. Players must track down and capture the ex-secret agent turned thief as she and her gang embark on a global crime spree. Along the way, you decipher clues using your Crime Computer and a 1000 page World Almanac. As you explore 30 great cities of the world, over 1,000 clues about national flags, currency, history, landmarks, culture and geography guide you on your way. Successful "detectives" rise through the ranks! A very interesting, educational tool, "Carmen Sandiego" teaches deductive reasoning, reference and research skills, world geography, history, economics, government and culture. Thanks to Norma Beck and Broderbund Software for a very interesting demonstration.

A drawing for the door prizes donated by Software, Etc. and Broderbund was held and the winners were: Donald Jones and Bill Raecke - Software, Etc. mouse mats, Gary Blocker - 10 pack of Sony Disks, Mike Harris - Tetris, and Tom Johnson - the first on his block with "Where In The World Is Carmen Sandiego". Many thanks to Bob Kaufmann of Software, Etc. and Norma Beck of Broderbund Software for the many prizes!

Brian Warren, District Marketing Support Specialist of Commodore Business Machines introduced Andre French, Regional Sales Support Manager of Commodore's Atlanta office. Andre brought the latest information from the recent Comdex Convention in Chicago and fielded numerous questions concerning the 2088 and 2286 Bridgecard, 2620 Chip Set, the new A590 Hard Drive for the Amiga 500, Workbench 1.4, the new Agnus Chip, as well as the departure of Max Toy from Commodore Headquarters in West Chester. Questions were raised by Scott Lamb concerning the lack of availability of business software by major developers. Scott feels that there is a need for this type of software for the Amiga to make it competitive in the corporate market. Due to the large volume of sales of business software by developers for MS-DOS and Apple machines, Andre explained that they have been slow to move into the Amiga market to date. This will surely change as the Amiga becomes more and more popular in the educational environment and users realize the power of the Amiga. In the meanwhile, Andre explained that a more reasonable approach, rather than waiting for the big developers to come to Amiga, was to make the power of Amiga software known to the non-Amiga community. The best example of this to date is SuperBase which has won several awards running in the MS-DOS environment.

A special thanks to Andre French, Brian Warren and Norma Beck for attending and making this meeting something really special and, of course, to Bob Kaufmann of Software, Etc. for setting it up.

Be sure to attend our next meeting on Tuesday, June 13th - same time, same place! See you then.

Amiga Central
by
Bill Raecke

Our May meeting featured a look at several new hardware products. The Vault is a new hard drive system from Progressive Peripherals and Software. It comes in a variety of sizes, but the one we saw was a 30 meg model. It is an external unit so it is just right for expanding your 500.

Tiny Tiger is a similar product - this one from M.A.S.T. This model had 50 meg. Both are available from Amazing Computer Systems in Dallas. Our thanks to Amazing for providing these products for our demonstration.

In other news of the night, Jack Smith talked for a while about the new Cannon camera that stores the pictures you take directly to a floppy disk which could then be easily ported to the Amiga. A great deal of interest was expressed in the camera by the membership and Jack promised that a future meeting would be based on a demonstration of this new hardware. Look for it to happen in June or July.

The bad news of the evening was the announcement that the Software Terminal would be ending its retail business effective the end of May. We deeply regret this loss. It should serve as a reminder to all of us to SUPPORT OUR LOCAL DEALERS. Forget the mail-order houses - local service is important.

The doorprize for the evening was a box of Sony diskettes. Craig

Bird walked away with it this time.

See you at the June meeting - third Thursday as usual.

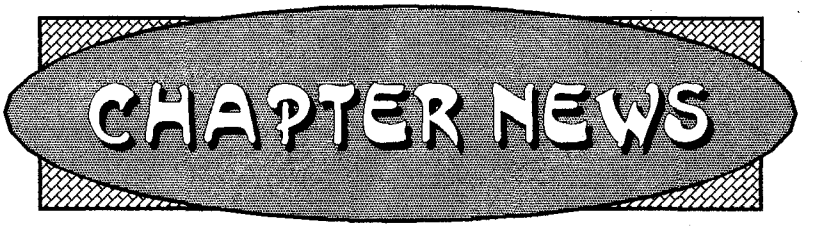
Arlington/Grand Prairie
by
Brad Dumler

A few folks weathered a thunderstorm with torrential rain and made it to the May meeting to see Eldor Luedtke Jr. put on a show with his C128D and a Hearsay 1000 speaking device. We got off to a late start and didn't have time for him to formally show us all of the things he'd planned for the program. But he put the speaking and listening thing through it's paces (or was it the other way around?) and gave us a great look at what it does and doesn't do, and how we might use one. We thank Eldor for coming to our meeting and sharing his experience.

Despite the brief terror of a tornado warning, it was still a worthwhile evening to attend the meeting as every member took home a copy of Superbase Starter and Supertype C64 application programs courtesy of Precision Software in Irving. These two freebies are valued at more than the cost of your MCCC membership, so see how it pays to attend our meeting?

Also, another doorprize was awarded in a computerized (of course) random drawing among the attendees. The Edward A. Mallang Co. of Everett, Washington (206) 252-8256 has donated two packages of The 'Original' Parameter Cross-Reference disk version. Jim Souba took home one of these this time (Hint: There could be another given away at the next meeting). This product is a specialized database of information concerning several commercially available disk backup copying programs and parameters. Mr. Mallang also has made T'O'PCR available to all MCCC members at a discount of 40% off for the disk version ($6 + p&h), and 30% off for the bound 140-page book version ($14 + p&h) if a minimum quantity of six are purchased. If you are interested in this product, contact Brad Dumler at 483-2322. We certainly appreciate the generous contribution of the software and the extension of the discount pricing for our group members.

At the June meeting, we will be having the demonstration of DPAINT, the C64 program to help create the graphics screens seen frequently on the Graphics BBS. Robyn Wilson of the HEB chapter, one of those frequently contributing these works of art, will be the guest speaker so don't miss this one! Also bring any computing questions that you have and we'll try to get them answered.



Fort Worth
by
Mary Louise Hagemeyer

The Fort Worth Chapter had a good meeting, and we thank our newsletter editor for telling everybody that it would be on the third Saturday.

We welcomed two visitors, Lorri and Bryan Culp, who attend schools in Joshua. They can probably teach the rest of us something about computers, and we're glad they joined the club.

Jim Marshall reviewed Library Disk # 342, which contains a word game, a text editor, several disk utilities, and a "Big Ben" routine that chimes every 15 minutes. Donald Tate reviewed # 288, which has "Screen Gem," a good drawing program, and "Super 8," a wedge with several useful programming aids.

Your substitute reporter's BASIC lesson was about avoiding the zero divisor error, and it provoked such comments as, "There are easier ways than that!"

Glen Herring demonstrated the Quick Brown Box, a battery-backed cartridge that plugs into the expansion port of a C64 or C128 and can be filled with the user's favorite (unprotected) programs. Any program can later be loaded in less than a second. Glen described several utilities that make this cartridge even more useful.

Brad Dumler presented The Write Stuff, a word processor which can be used as an independent program or as an upgrade to the Quick Brown Box. In the latter case, text can be saved in the box and will not be wiped out by a power failure. Our thanks to Glen and Brad for their interesting presentations.

Next month Jim Marshall will explain the mysteries of the Disk Operating System.

The meeting will be on the third Saturday again--June 17, 1:30 p.m., at the library on Hulen Street.

Hurst/Euless/Bedford
by
Robyn Wilson

Agenda for June Meeting:

1:30 PM Business
2:00 PM Geos, Version 2.0, The Integrated System
3:00 PM Question & Answer Session

The next meeting is set for June 17 at the Hurst Recreation Center. There will be a demonstration of Geos and its many features such as word processing, filing, databases, drawing, and much more. All this on a 3 1/2 disk! There will be a question and answer session for Geos after the talk.

If someone has an interest in setting up their own special interest library like one for C/PM or business, talk to Curtis Crago, our chapter librarian, for more information. This would help to organize our disks in a way more people could access and enjoy them.

Do you have a problem with a program or piece of hardware???? Bring it to the meeting and one of our many experts will try to help you!!!

Calendar of Events

June 3	MCCC Board of Directors 10:00 AM - N.Richland Hills Community Ctr. Jack DeTore, 817-275-3762	June 17	Fort Worth Chapter 1:30 PM - Southwest Regional Library Bob Krause, 817-292-6639
June 10	Arlington/Grand Prairie Workshop 1:30 PM - Grand Prairie Library Louis Nailor, 214-262-4576		Hurst-Euless-Bedford Chapter 1:30 PM - Hurst Recreation Center Eldor Luedtke, Jr., 817-626-0518
June 13	Amiga By-The-Loop Chapter 7:30 PM - N.Richland Hills Church of Christ Brent Wood - 817-246-3707	June 20	Arlington/Grand Prairie Chapter 7:00 PM - Arlington Community Center Glen Herring, 817-572-0489
June 15	Amiga Central Chapter 7:30 PM - Arlington Community Center Bill Keatley, 817-485-0666	July 1	MCCC Board of Directors 10:00 AM - N.Richland Hills Community Ctr. Jack DeTore, 817-275-3762

July Newsletter Deadline - June 19

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- In Defense of Word Perfect
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- A Review of Neuromancer
- Comments on AmiFORUM and The MCCC Spring Thing

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